

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 ACDA-07 SAJ-01

SCCT-01 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 SCS-03 SCA-01

DHA-02 /099 W

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O P 110948Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1054

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 0011

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6105

STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JULY 11 MILITARY SITUATION STAGNATES

AS SYRIAN WAR OF INTERDICTION BEGINS TO PINCH PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS

REF: BEIRUT 6083

1. SUMMARY: CHRISTIANS STILL ADVANCING IN NORTH. CAMPAIGN, ALONG WITH SYRIAN PRESSURES NORTH OF TRIPOLI, APPEARS TO BE DEVELOPING INTO

ENCIRCLEMENT OF TRIPOLI. TYRE, NEAR ISRAELI BORDER, MAY SOON BE ONLY REMAINING LEFTIST/PALESTINIAN CHANNEL FOR FOREIGN SUPPLIES. FIGHTING DRAGS ON AT TELL ZAATAR, AND BEIRUT TRADITIONAL CONFRONTATION LINES ACTIVE. ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY WIDESPREAD ARTILLERY ATTACKS BUT LIMITED GROUND ACTION. SIDON REFINERY IN FLAMES, INCLUDING GASOLINE STORAGE TANKS. BEIRUT RIFE WITH SPECULATION ON JULY 12 ARAB LEAGUE MEETING, BUT NO SIDE ENTERTAINS HIGH EXPECTATIONS. INCREASED AL "STRIKE FORCES" UNDER DISCUSSION, WITH MORE MODERATE FORCE OF EGYPTIANS, SUDANESE AND SAUDIS CONSIDERED LIKELY TO HAVE WIDER
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SUPPORT IN LEBANON, EVEN FROM LEFTISTS AND PALESTINIANS, THAN A

MORE RADICALLY TINTED FORCE OF IRAQIS, LIBYANS AND ALGERIANS.
END SUMMARY.

2. NORTH LEBANON REMAINS MOST ACTIVE FRONT. CHRISTIANS HAVE TAKEN TOWN OF ENFE AND ARE REPORTED STILL MOVING NORTH. VOICE OF LEBANON (KATAEB) SAYS RIGHTISTS HAVE TAKEN DEIR BALAMAND AREA OVERLOOKING BOHSASS AND FIH AND HAVE CONSOLIDATED POSITIONS AT AABA. SYRIANS, WHO UNTIL NOW HAVE NOT PROVIDED GROUND SUPPORT TO CHRISTIANS NORTHERN CAMPAIGN, ARE NOW MOVING TROOPS SOUTH TOWARD TRIPOLI FROM AKKAR REGION. NO LARGE-SCALE CLASHES REPORTED BETWEEN SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST GROUPS BUT MOVE EFFECTIVELY TIGHTENS SQUEEZE ON TRIPOLI AND IS IN KEEPING WITH SIMILAR SYRIAN EFFORTS TO BLOCKADE BEIRUT AND SIDON. TRIPOLI AND ZGHORTA CONTINUE MUTUAL HEAVY BOMBARDMENTS. LEFT CLAIMS SYRIANS BOMBARDING NAHR EL-BARLD PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMP NORTH OF TRIPOLI.

3. AS SYRIAN CLAMP-DOWN ON LEBANESE PORTS CONTINUES, PALESTINIANS AND LEFTISTS CONCERNED OVER SUPPLY LINES INTO COUNTRY. EFFECTIVE SURROUNDING OF TRIPOLI NOW LEAVES TYRE ONLY LEFTIST CONTROLLED PORT WITH OPEN ROADS TO HINTERLAND. TYRE IS ALREADY SCENE OF RESUPPLY EFFORTS. MUCH LARGER TRAFFIC THROUGH PORT COULD PROVOKE STRONG ISRAELI REACTION. HOWEVER, ISRAEL MAY WANT TO KEEP POT BOILING IN LEBANON AND ENSUEY PALESTINIAN PREOCCUPATION ELSEWHERE.

4. HOUSE-TO-HOUSE FIGHTING AND PERIODIC BOMBARDMENTS CONTINUE AT TELL ZAATAR WHERE PALESTINIANS CLAIM TO HAVE REPULSED ANOTHER ASSAULT AND CHRISTIANS SAY THEY HAVE TAKEN MORE PRISONERS. PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST ARTILLERY CONTINUES POUND MANSOURIE, MAKALLES, DORA AND SURROUNDING AREAS. IN BEIRUT PORT LARGE FIRE OF UNDETERMINED

ORIGIN BURNS OUT OF CONTROL. CENTER CITY CONFRONTATION LINE IS ACTIVE

THREE FRENCH EMBASSY SECURITY PERSONNEL, ABDUCTED JULY 9, WERE RELEASED JULY 10, UNHARMED.

5. ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY, WIDESPREAD SPORADIC BOMBARDMENTS AND LIMITED GROUND ACTION. LEFTIST ATTACK ON HOUMAL IN ALEY CAZA SAID REPULSED. PROJECTILES FELL ON JOUNIE AND NEIGHBORING VILLAGES
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JULY 11 CAUSING MATERIAL DAMAGE. IN THE BEKAA STYW Y CONTINUE PRESSURE ON BAALBEK, BUT CITY NOT YET TAKEN. Wafa CLAIMS SYRIANS HAVE BOMBARDED BEKAA VALLEY VILLAGES OF BEDNAEL AND ARSAL. SYRIANS CONTINUE BOMBARD SIDON AND SURROUNDING AREAS. ZAHRANI REFINERY CONTINUES TO BURN, ESPECIALLY THREE LARGE GASOLINE STORAGE TANKS.

6. EVE OF ARAB LEAGUE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR CAIRO JULY 12 IS

SCENE OF FLURRY OF MEETINGS IN LEBANON AND VARIETY OF POLITICAL PROPOSALS, MOST OF WHICH APPEAR NON-STARTERS . JUMBLATT ISSUES APPEAL TO SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT, IRAQ, ALGERIA AND LIBYA FOR ASSISTANCE IN BREAKING SYRIAN BLOCKADE. HE REPORTED TO HAVE SAID IF SYRIAN DESIGNS ON LEBANON NOT COUNTERED SOON, HE WOULD LEAVE LEBANON, NEVER TO RETURN. RAYMOND EDDE SAYS HIS NATIONAL UNION FRONT WILL OFFICIALLY BE FORMED JULY 11. RASHID KARAME ATTEMPTS COUNTER CAMILLE CHAMOUN'S NEW POSITION AS FOREIGN MINISTER BY INVITING ARAB AMBASSADORS TO HEAR EXPLANATION OF HIS VIEWS. LEBANESE FRONT HAS NOT YET RECEIVED PROMISED AL TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE REPORT AND ATTACKS TUNISIAN COMMITTEE MEMBER CHATTI FOR "NOT UNDERSTANDING ANYTHING." FRONT IS REPORTED IN FAVOR OF NEW AGREEMENT REGULATING STATUS OF PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON AND DISTRIBUTION OF PALESTINIANS AMONG ALL ARAB STATES. SYRIA IS BELIEVED

IN FAVOR THE FORMER, BUT NOT THE LATTER. YASIR ARAFAT HOLDS MEETINGS WITH IMAM MUSA SADR, KAMAL JUMBLATT AND LIBYAN PREMIER JALLOUD.

7. PRESS REPORTS RUMORS OF TWO PARALLEL PROPOSALS WHICH MAY SURFACE FOR DISCUSSION IF AL FOREIGN MINISTERS DO MEET JULY 12. PROPOSAL ONE SUGGESTS IRAQI/LIBYAN/ALGERIAN STRIKE FORCE TO RESTORE ORDER TO LEBANON. THIS PLAN, OF IRAQI ORIGIN, WOULD ENJOY LITTLE LEBANESE SUPPORT, RIGHT OR LEFT. PROPOSAL TWO, SAID TO BE EGYPTIAN INSPIRED, SUGGESTS EGYPTIAN/SYRIAN/SAUDI ARABIAN STRIKE FORCE. LATTER PLAN SAID TO HAVE APPROVAL OF JUMBLATT AND ARAFAT, BUT WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION. SEELYE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL SITUATION, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT06105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760267-0482
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760770/aaaacjns.tel
Line Count: 142
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BEIRUT 6083
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE SITUATION JULY 11 MILITARY SITUATION STAGNATES AS SYRIAN WAR OF INTERDICTION BEGINS TO PINCH PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006